

MITCHAM COMMUNITY FORUM
27 FEBRUARY 2020

(7.15 pm - 9.00 pm)

PRESENT Councillors (in the Chair), Councillor David Chung

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held at Vestry Hall, and chaired by Councillor David Chung. Around 20 residents attended, as well as three other Councillors, and officers of the council and its partners. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 LONDON ASSEMBLY UPDATE (Agenda Item 2)

Leonie Cooper, Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth, provided any update on the work of the London Assembly. The role of Assembly is primarily to hold the Mayor of London to account. There are 25 Assembly Members, 14 geographical, 11 from a top-up list. At the moment five parties are represented Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat, UKIP and Green parties.

There are a series of cross party committees. Leonie is currently Deputy Chair of the Environment Committee, and Chair of Economy Committee. The committees look at range of projects for example single use plastics, which resulted in roll out of water fountains; biodiversity and housing, which has been integrated into new London Plan. The Economy Committee looked at high streets, which included evidence from Love Wimbledon

The final version of the London Plan is currently with the Secretary of State for approval. The plan includes requirements for net-biodiversity improvement on developments and for urban green space.

Currently the Mayors proposed budget is under scrutiny. The Mayor has a budget of £18bn covering Transport for London; the Metropolitan Police; London Fire Brigade; a number of develop corporations; and specific projects like the night-time economy, and London is Open.

A resident asked if we are likely to see zero emission developments like Bed Zed repeated elsewhere. Leonie said that Bed Zed was developed by Peabody Trust and is an interesting scheme. Since it was built, the process for developing housing has changed, moving from government grants to Housing Associations too funding having to be borrowed or be matched from sales on the same scheme. This change

makes innovation harder. The new London Plan will push stricter environmental standards and zero carbon emissions.

A resident said they felt roadworks and traffic calming schemes were increasing pollution. Leonie replied that in Waltham Forest the mini-Holland scheme changed priorities in favour of buses, cycling, walking and closed roads to cars. Initially the scheme was unpopular but behaviour has changed with huge reduction in car use resulting in improved air quality. [Data released](#) by the Mayor has shown that the ULEZ and Low Bus Emission Zones have already had a significant impact on reducing air pollution. The ULEZ will extend to the South Circular in 2021 but Leonie would like to see extended further south.

A resident said that pollution still high in Mitcham. Leonie responded that there is still more work to do; the priorities to date have been the worst places for air quality but everywhere will improve as bus fleet changes and ULEZ expands.

A resident was concerned about the cost of replacing old vehicles. Leonie said the [Mayor of London scrappage scheme](#) is aimed at small/medium businesses and charities; and with the ULEZ extension still 18 months away, there is time to take advantage of it. There is also a separate scheme for the public on low incomes. We need to take those decisions because of the benefits to health from improving air quality.

A resident asked about the relative power of the London Plan. Leonie explained that at the top of the planning framework is the National Planning Policy Framework, then comes the London Plan, then borough Local Plan's. Merton's plan will need be into conformity with the London Plan but the London Plan needs to reflect the NPPF. There is some difference between London Plan and NPPF over fracking and greenbelt development which may be why the Secretary of State is reviewing the policy. Under the Mayor's planning powers they can call-in some larger schemes, above the borough responsibility.

A resident asked about enforcing 20MPH speed limits, especially for buses. A 20MPH limit is being introduced on all Transport for London roads from April, but enforcement powers will still be with the Police.

A resident asked about the proposals to develop Benedict Wharf. Leonie said that the [Mayor had written to Merton](#) with a number of objections to the current scheme, including that this is currently strategic industrial land so Merton needs to find alternative equivalent land; and there is also insufficient affordable housing. The Mayor will scrutinise any new plans.

3 IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TOGETHER (Agenda Item 3)

Karen Worthington, a local GP and part of Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and James Blythe, Managing Director Merton and Wandsworth CCGs, gave a presentation on the proposals for the future of critical care services at the Trust. The presentation is an appendix to this report.

The Government has allocated £500m to improve buildings and build a new Specialist Emergency Care hospital (SECH). Under the proposals 85% services stay at Epsom and St Helier sites and a minimum of £80m will be spent on improving the existing buildings. Emergency services do not currently meet national standards and CQC rate them as needs improvement. There is also problem with recruiting sufficient staff. The current buildings not fit for purpose and expensive to maintain which creates an ongoing problem with finances

The new clinical model would mean at least two District Hospitals (Urgent Treatment Centre; Outpatient services; Diagnostic services; Planned Care procedures; Hospital Rehab/recovery) and one Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (Emergency Department; Acute Medicine; Emergency Surgery; Critical Care; Births; Inpatient Paediatrics). There are three options for the new SECH site: Epsom, St Helier, or Sutton (next to the Royal Marsden). Sutton is the preferred site for the CCGs as it has the smallest increase in average travel times, would be easiest and quickest to build; and based on the Government assessment formulae provides the best value for money.

Modelling shows a slight increase in beds is needed, most would be at Epsom, St Helier and Sutton but some would need to be provided at other hospitals including St Georges, Croydon, Kingston or the Surrey hospitals to mitigate increase pressure on those hospitals. There would be little time difference in Ambulance and Car travel to the single SECH site, but there will be increases in Public Transport journey times for some people. The NHS would need to work with transport providers to mitigate this before the facility opens.

All three options are possible and no decision has been made so responses to the consultation are encouraged before it closes on 1 April 2020.

A resident asked if there was a meeting in Mitcham on 5 March. There is a listening event on 5 March at Chak89 from 6.30pm. Details of all events can be found on the [Improving Healthcare Together website](#).

A resident asked if land opposite St Helier could be used in a land swap to speed up the option of building at that site. If that is a viable option then please feedback in consultation, however that still would not solve issues around travel times and impact on other sites.

A resident asked if this was in effect a Sutton Council decision. The decision will be taken by the local NHS decision, but will be subject to the usual planning application process.

A resident said there was information missing from consultation namely that 62% of St Helier beds would be lost; any new beds will be in Croydon/St Georges; that the proposals meant moving services from deprived area to an affluent area but there is a correlation with A&E attendance in higher deprivation areas. As a result, the plan should be to keep both hospitals and invest at both sites. James responded that the number of beds will increase but depending on option, some will need to go elsewhere – 50 in the case of preferred option of Sutton. Deprivation analysis is available in the Integrated Impact Analysis includes all the details that inform the decision and many of the patients in most deprived areas in Merton already go to St Georges. The £500m investment is in capital funds so will not help to get new staff, and there is shortage in specialist staff regardless of funding.

A resident asked about the location for planned surgery that is not day surgery. Karen explained that this would depend on the assessment of risk with low risk at District Hospitals, and higher risk at the SECH. They will clarify this for future presentations.

A resident asked if the £80m for the old sites would be for each or both. The money will be spent across the two sites, which will bring both sites up to standard. A resident asked about the need for single bed rooms, these are needed for both infection control and privacy/dignity.

A resident said that the Sutton site was no good for Mitcham residents to get to. James replied that most patients attending A&E would do so by ambulance, whilst driving to the UTC at St Helier will still be an option for most residents.

There is a need to do more to divert patients from A&E; and needs effective triage at St Georges. Merton CCG has expanded out of hours GP appointments, and in the A&E they send patients to the UTC. There is a need to improve the triage at St Georges so they have been putting more resources in, including more GPs.

Walk-in centres have all been abolished they were largely duplicating GPs. UTCs do the same but a lot more as have diagnostics and other infrastructure.

A resident asked why plans included new car parks at Epsom and St Helier sites. There is still demand for car parks but will follow up on modelling those two sites.

A resident asked about bed blocking. James said there is very strong partnership with Merton Council, as a result the number of delayed discharges is really low compared to past.

4 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 4)

The Council is planning to build on the car park in Fair Green leaving insufficient parking in Mitcham for shops. The council needs to look at the future needs for parking in the town centre and for all developments.

A resident said they were pleased to see Merton Council filling up potholes in Mitcham but had concerns about drain cleaning / Street sweeping.

A number of residents raised concerns about fly-tipping and street litter, in particular on Church Path and Love Lane. There has been some [research on fly-tipping across London](#) which showed the problem was increasing, and [Veolia have submitted a specific action plan for Mitcham](#). Performance monitoring of Veolia is provided to the [Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel](#). It was agreed to ask officers and representatives from Veolia to a future meeting.

A resident asked about Bishopford Bridge. Merton Council's Cabinet has agreed to replace the bridge, with construction due to begin in the summer and completed in summer 2021.

5 BOUNDARY CHANGES (Agenda Item 5)

Kris Witherington gave a presentation on the proposals for new electoral ward arrangements from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The presentation is available as an appendix to this report. [The consultation on the changes is open until Monday 2 March](#).

UPDATE: the consultation has been extended to 16 March.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 6)

Councillor Chung thanked residents for attending and closed the meeting.

Date of future meetings:

Thursday 8 October 2020 at 7.15pm, Vestry Hall (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

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